



Automation Alley's Global Trade Mission 2008

The Global Trade Mission (**GTM**) was launched as a county-specific answer to questions raised in 1998 by President Bill Clinton's Export Council, where leading CEOs lamented regarding a lack of American high school students' understanding of exporting and the current trade environment. As a result of those conversations, the Secretary of Commerce, in collaboration with business, trade and government leaders, developed the Virtual Trade Mission (VTM), a simulated trade mission focusing on the Big Emerging Markets (BEMs).

Approximately 100-150 students from across Southeast Michigan school districts will be placed in teams of four and will assume **Corporate Roles** to help guide their research and are issued a **Trade Challenge**: to research, develop, and market a product for consumers in another country. These **Challenge Teams** develop and present their business plan to an **Evaluator Panel** for constructive feedback. Students who return to subsequent GTM events work to further their knowledge as **Trade Analysts** who assist and evaluate the Challenge Teams.

Teacher-Coaches facilitate in the workrooms while volunteers from area companies serve as **Business Coaches** who work side-by-side with students in developing their market plan. Teams stay on track by working toward stipulated outcomes outlined on their **Passport to Success**.

Embedded seminars provide students first-hand information on key topics, including **Free Trade Agreements** and **Financing your Global Mission**. The **GTM Cultural Exchange** exposes students to the cultural values and business overview of more than 20 countries worldwide. **Global Business Experts** from trade, government, and business introduce students to the global economy, Michigan's role, and their own role as a member of the future workforce in this new global economy. With the assistance of the U.S. Commercial Service, actual **videoconferences** are also set-up to provide additional current information to target markets.

Students gain critical workplace skills, as outlined in the *Michigan Curriculum Framework*: awareness of cultural differences; techniques in problem solving and project management; and the ability to communicate and work with a diverse team. A culmination of the GTM experience is the **Exportsmanship Award**, which recognizes the student team that blends these skills with the talents of their teammates to pull together at the GTM event.

Since 1999, over 1,400 students have participated in GTM. In 2008, Automation Alley is proud to host events in both Macomb and Oakland Counties with students participating from Genesee County, as well. With the tenth annual event in Oakland County and first annual event in Macomb, Automation Alley's GTM stands as a regional response to the relevant challenges of the future.

For more information, please contact Automation Alley at (248) 457-3215 or gtm@automationalley.com.

We're going global...want to come along?